

Greetings FHI Stakeholders!

See below for updates, announcements, and save the dates from the Family Homelessness Initiative.

INITIATIVE NEWS AND ACTIVITIES

FHI ADVISORY GROUP UPDATE:

Lisa Wolters and Kira Zylstra, Advisory Group (AG) co-chairs, attended the January IAC meeting to present the Advisory Group's feedback on the CEA final report prepared by Focus Strategies. The IAC had an opportunity to hear from Katharine Gale, engage in a discussion about the recommendations, and provide the Advisory Group with some direction moving forward (see CEA Update section below for more details).

As a follow up, the Advisory Group held an extended meeting after the IAC to continue their work related to the coordinated entry and assessment report. Katharine Gale assisted in facilitating a discussion with the Advisory Group on some of the structural changes to the CEA model, specifically a model with multiple points of entry (a more 'decentralized' model, not a "no wrong door" approach).

In addition, the AG discussed the recommendation related to the removal of FUP Vouchers (see Final Report, page 38 – "*Focus Strategies recommends that the FUP vouchers be removed from the CEA process to support the more targeted use of these vouchers and to relieve FHC of the challenge of identifying eligible families in a timely fashion.*"). The AG agreed to ask the IAC to approve the temporary removal of the 24 current FUP vouchers from CEA/FHC at the March meeting (to be re-evaluated with during system redesign).

The FHI Advisory Group meets every other month (next meeting is March 18). *The agenda and meeting notes can be found on the FHI website.*

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES - NEWS & UPDATES:

Coordinated Entry System – Final Report Presented to IAC

Katharine Gale of Focus Strategies, our CEA system consultant, presented the final report ('*Family Homelessness Coordinated Entry System Analysis and Refinement Project*') to the IAC on January 12. The report includes recommendations broken into four categories: a) Short-term Refinements to Current CEA Model; b) Longer-term Changes Needed Under Any Model; c) Address Access for Special Needs Families; and d) Consider Structural Changes to the Broader CEA Model.

Main points from IAC discussion:

- Outlined which decisions will be made by IAC or Funders group (*screening criteria reduction/standardization, CEA governance, determining prioritization, adopting new assessment tool, and data integration*);
- The IAC asked the Family Homelessness Advisory Group (or a small workgroup from the AG) to further explore the pros/cons of a decentralized system versus maintaining a centralized system;
- The IAC approved the recommendation to allow all homeless housing units specifically designated to serve survivors of domestic violence to be temporarily removed from FHC until the final model for CEA is determined and approved. Michelle Valdez is currently working with KCCADV and the DV housing providers who are choosing to "opt out" of FHC on the next steps. There will be a meeting with DV providers, FHC, 211, and CEH this week to finalize the transition and discuss communication. FHI staff will send out more information after this meeting.

In addition, on Jan. 14 the Advisory Group held an extended meeting in which Katharine Gale was in attendance to further discuss the report and to facilitate a discussion around potential future models. The AG charted out what a decentralized model might look like here, as well as the benefits/challenges of such a model.

Next steps:

- Recommendations from the report were discussed at the CEH Funders Group meeting on Feb. 2 as part of the overall vision for CEA for all populations. The Funders Group will be discussing these at the March IAC meeting.
- A small group of FHC funders/CEH will be meeting over the next several weeks to begin to map out what a decentralized model will look like in our community, focusing on resources, capacity, funding, and timeline.

Click on the following link ([Final Report](#)) to review the report. In addition, you can find all the materials from the community meetings as well as regular updates on the [CEA page](#) of the website. If you have any questions about the process, please feel to contact Michelle Valdez at michelle.valdez@cehkc.org.

System Realignment Work

The first group of agencies who have agreed to realign their housing programs have been meeting with CEH and their funders to discuss realignment plans. The FHI team appreciates the significant amount of work these agencies have undertaken to forward our community's goals. Because of their efforts, we anticipate reaching our first year benchmarks for realignment (approximately 250 units realigning to permanent housing models). The five agencies include Compass Housing Alliance, Solid Ground, Wellspring Family Services, YWCA, and Hopelink.

Next Steps:

Depending on the agency and project(s), immediate next steps could include:

- Further evaluating realignment options based on current mission, strategies, and organizational goals
- Examining the feasibility of realignment plans to ensure projects "pencil out"
- Reviewing regulatory and contractual obligations
- Implementing realignment strategies, on target to make shifts in 2015

Additional information about system realignment efforts can be found on our website at www.kingcounty.gov/familyhomelessness. If you have questions or would like to discuss realignment options for any of your time-limited programs, please contact Triina Tennelo at triina.tennelo@cehkc.org.

Systems Innovation Grants (SIG)**Shelter to Housing Project**

Last month, local shelter providers came together to learn about the Shelter to Housing Project, a project providing shelters with flexible client assistance funds to support families in efforts to quickly resolve their episode of homelessness and assist them in establishing what is needed to qualify for housing (IDs, birth certificates, arrears, etc.). Funds are being made available through Building Changes System Innovation Grants. We are all looking forward to launching this project, which is slated to begin in March. *See the training announcement (SKCCH & FHI co-sponsored meeting) below for a learning opportunity for shelter providers.*

Risk Mitigation Funds

Another project funded by Building Changes, System Innovation Grants is in development. Risk Mitigation Funds will be made available to transitional housing projects that reduce screening criteria (per established guidelines) and projects undertaking realignment to offset any unanticipated costs (maintenance, repairs, and other losses). We are preparing for a launch meeting in March. Stay tuned for a 'save the date' coming soon.

OTHER NEWS, OPPORTUNITIES, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

NEWS & UPDATES:

One Night Count Reveals 3,772 Unsheltered in King County on a Single Night

As you have heard multiple times by now, on the morning of January 23 from 2am to 5am, nearly one thousand volunteers across King County counted the men, women, and children who are unsheltered on a single night in our community. They reported 3,772 people had no shelter in King County that night, a substantial increase over those found without shelter last year. During the 2014 Count, volunteers found 3,123 people surviving outside without shelter. Currently, King County emergency shelters and transitional housing can hold over 6,000 individuals each night.

Click [here](#) to read a letter from the Director of CEH, Mark Putnam that calls out ways you and those in your network can support the effort to make homelessness Rare, Brief, and One Time in King County.

To read a summary of the 2015 One Night Count, click [here](#).

King County Housing Authority is accepting applications for placement on the Section 8 Rental Assistance Waiting List

KCHA's Section 8 voucher program will accept online-only applications from **6 a.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2015 to 4 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 10, 2015**. A random lottery drawing will be used to select 2,500 of these applications for the Section 8 waiting list. Any agency requesting a fee to assist you or who guarantees placement on the waiting list is fraudulent. Please report any such agency to KCHA. Find the Section 8 application on the [KCHA website](#).

HUD McKinney COC Funding Announcement (1/26/15)

A record \$28 million in federal homeless assistance funds awarded jointly to the City of Seattle and King County, including:

- \$3.6 million bonus award, the second largest in the country, to transition over 200 chronically homeless individuals to permanent supportive housing by providing long-term rental assistance and services.
- A new Regional Rapid Re-Housing Project that will assist 50 homeless families countywide to transition from homelessness to permanent housing. The program will focus on families who are homeless, either in shelter or on the streets.
- The balance of funding awarded to the Seattle/King County Continuum of Care supports 77 community-based projects for a total of 2,176 units of housing: 1,457 units of permanent supportive housing for homeless people with disabilities and 721 units of transitional housing; Continuum of Care planning and the Safe Harbors HMIS.

Full story: <http://kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/constantine/News/release/2015/January/28-homeless-grants.aspx>

Comment on the CEH Draft Strategic Plan

CEH has released the first draft of a new strategic plan to make homeless rare, brief, and one-time in King County. This [website](#) includes an overview of the plan, deeper look into each proposed strategy, and measurable goals that we will use to assess our progress and increase accountability. Please review and comment by Feb. 15.

Job Opportunity: Clinical Housing Specialist – South King County <http://www.valleycities.org/about/careers-at-valley-cities/>

Valley Cities Counseling and Consultation seeks a Clinical Housing Specialist to support the recovery from and management of behavioral health issues by providing access to safe, stable, subsidized housing for those with

chronic homelessness in South King County. In this position you will be working with Standard Supportive Housing (SSH) and Shelter Plus care (SPC) programs.

UPCOMING FUNDING OR TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES:

Rapid Re-housing Case Management and Services Webinar

On Tuesday, Feb. 10, at 1 p.m. ET, the National Alliance will host a webinar on case management and services for rapid re-housing providers. The webinar, "Core Components of Rapid Re-Housing: Case Management and Services," will be the third of a three-part series of webinars on the "Core Components of Rapid Re-Housing." Speakers will examine how providers are delivering case management and services as part of a rapid re-housing intervention.

[Register for the webinar](#)

WHAT'S COMING NEXT FOR FHI

Monthly FHI Stakeholder Information Session

The Family Homelessness Initiative staff host monthly information sessions on the 3rd Wednesday of the month to talk with local stakeholders (providers and funders) about the work of the Initiative. This is an opportunity to hear about current projects, what is coming up next, and to ask questions and provide input. The FHC Feedback Meetings, which are an opportunity for service providers and partners to hear updates on new policies/procedures at FHC and to provide feedback, will directly follow the Info Session each month.

**There is no Family Homelessness Information Session in February.
The February 18 FHC Feedback Session will be held at CCS from 10:00-11:00am)**

THE NEXT FHI INFO SESSION will be:

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

9:00-10:00am

(Immediately followed by the **FHC Feedback Meeting** from 10:00-11:00am)

Location: 2100 Building (2100 24th Ave S, Seattle, WA 98144)

Topic: TBD

Contact Triina Tennelo at triina.tennelo@kingcounty.gov or visit the Initiative website for more information on the Info Session or Emily Harris-Shears at EmilyHS@ccsww.org for more information on the FHC Feedback Meetings.

SKCCH's Families with Children Committee and the CEH Family Homelessness Initiative join forces for quarterly, co-sponsored meetings on ending family homelessness

February Meeting - Diversion Learning Opportunity

Once each quarter, the Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness' (SKCCH) Families with Children Committee (FWC) meeting will be co-sponsored with the FHI in an effort to expand both group's communities of learning. The **focus of the February meeting will be on diversion strategies for homeless families.** We invite anyone interested in hearing about effective strategies and lessons learned from our local Diversion Pilot providers. Emergency Shelter providers are strongly encouraged to attend to begin exploring strategies that can be utilized with the new Shelter to Housing Project

Meeting Details:

February 25th, 9:30-11:30am

YWCA – 2820 E. Cherry St.

CONTACT US

If you have questions about any of the above updates, or if you would like us to share any announcements, opportunities, or items on your behalf in future monthly emails, you can contact Michelle Valdez at michelle.valdez@cehkc.org.

Please feel free to contact any FHI staff member for more information or technical assistance:

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Visit our website to learn more about the Family Homelessness Initiative or to locate any of the documents referenced in this email at www.kingcounty.gov/familyhomelessness.

For more information on the Committee to End Homelessness (CEH) or to see the most recent monthly newsletter, go to the website at www.cehkc.org